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RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY 0025
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 0096
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0027
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4323
RUEHSL/AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA PRIORITY 0222
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 1963
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0061
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY 0176
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY 0062
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 0591
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 2060
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 0218
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1871
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 0285
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 2923

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 005474

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [PBTS](#) [ET](#) [ER](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: RUSSIA CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY FOR VIOLENCE IN
THE HORN OF AFRICA

REF: SECSTATE 153831

Classified By: M/C for Political Affairs Alice G. Wells for reason 1.4
(b/d).

11. (C) Summary. While the GOR supports UNSC Presidential Statement 9169 urging both Ethiopia and Eritrea to take concrete steps to implement the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC)'s delineation decision, the GOR does not support the EEBC's plan for "virtually" demarcating the border and believes the EEBC must fulfill its mandate by implementing a physical border. During Ethiopian FM Seyoum's November 7 visit to Moscow the GOR warned him about destabilizing comments and action. The GOR believed the United Nation Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) mandate should be extended beyond its current expiration date. Seyoum told the GOR that Ethiopia would contribute 5000 troops to the Darfur hybrid force, and the GOR informed Ethiopia it would contribute one million dollars to humanitarian relief in Somalia before the end of 2007. End Summary.

GOR Concerned About Border Tensions

12. (C) MFA International Organizations Counselor Albert Sitnikov told us on November 20 that while the GOR supported UNSC Presidential Statement 9169 urging both Ethiopia and Eritrea to accept and implement the EEBC's delineation decision "without preconditions," the GOR was opposed to the EEBC's idea of "virtual demarcation" and believed it may lead to violence. According to Sitnikov, Lavrov called virtual demarcation "legal nonsense." The GOR believed virtual demarcation falls outside of the Algiers Agreement and that it was up to involved parties how to demarcate the border. He said Russia would have to support Ethiopian withdrawal from the agreement were the EEBC to insist upon virtual demarcation.

13. (C) Deputy Director for Africa Nikolai Ratsiborinskiy told us the EEBC's current proposal had paralyzed the situation. He noted that Lavrov had stated publicly that a

virtual demarcation could destabilize the entire region, and the GOR believed signals from Asmara and Addis Ababa had hinted at their readiness to resume conflict.

¶3. (C) Commenting on the November 7 visit of Ethiopian FM Seyoum, Ratsiborinskiy said Lavrov told Seyoum privately the GOR would support Ethiopia's opposition to virtual demarcation in the UNSC, but also warned Seyoum about statements and actions that could destabilize the fragile situation. Ratsiborinskiy told us Seyoum responded that Ethiopia's economic growth is increasing steadily, and that Ethiopia would not jeopardize that growth with renewed conflict. Seyoum pointed out the Ethiopian army is fully engaged in Somalia and Sudan, and that the Ethiopian government wants to shrink the army, not entangle it elsewhere.

Darfur and Somalia

¶4. (C) Seyoum announced to the GOR that Ethiopia will contribute 5000 troops to the hybrid force in Darfur. Ethiopian political counselor Elias Amare told us that while the GOR had previously been protective of Sudan's sovereignty, Seyoum had noted a shift in policy to be more supportive of the hybrid force. Elias also told us the GOR announced that it would contribute a million dollars worth of humanitarian aid to Somalia by the end of 2007, which Ratsiborinskiy confirmed, citing the GOR's worries about the continuing chaos and the situation becoming a catalyst for regional conflict.

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Comment

¶5. GOR support for the UN Presidential Statement was carefully worded to support "delineation," not "demarcation." If Ethiopia does not recognize the EEBC's virtual demarcation, the GOR has said it will be prepared to take its side in a UNSC debate.

BURNS